CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1.   A computer system for editing an interactive image video tour, comprising:

a computer including the image editor providing a visual program interface for editing an interactive image video tour associated with a predetermined facility;

a database in communication with the computer containing data associated with a plurality of images associated with the predetermined facility comprising a portion of the interactive image video tour; and

a viewer in communication with the computer for displaying the plurality of images of the predetermined facility for enabling a user to view a virtual interactive tour of the predetermined facility.

2.   The computer system of claim 1, wherein the image editor provides a visual program interface for creating an interactive image video tour with the plurality of images contained in the database.

3.   The computer system of claim 1, wherein the image editor further comprises a directory panel.

4.   The computer system of claim 3, wherein the directory panel further comprises a module for displaying a directory list of the plurality of images accessible by the image editor, the directory providing a hierarchical representation of folders for organizing the plurality of images into separate groups.

5.   The computer system of claim 3, wherein the directory panel further comprises a module for displaying a history list of directories containing the plurality of images selected while creating the interactive image video tour.

6.   The computer system of claim 5, wherein the directory panel further comprises a module for displaying a thumbnail image viewer directory containing a plurality of thumbnail images of the plurality of images available for creating the interactive image video tour.

7.   The computer system of claim 6, wherein the thumbnail image viewer directory displays the plurality of thumbnail images in a hierarchical order for organizing the plurality of thumbnail images into separate groups.

8.   The computer system of claim 1, wherein the image editor further comprises a tour panel.

9.   The computer system of claim 8, wherein the tour panel further comprises a tour thumbnail image viewer for displaying the plurality of images that have been selected for the interactive image video tour.

10.   The computer system of claim 8, wherein the tour panel further comprises a map panel for identifying a location of the plurality of images within the interactive image video tour.

11.   The computer system of claim 8, wherein the tour panel further comprises a tour tree for displaying a hierarchical outline view of the interactive image video tour.

12.   A method of editing portions of an interactive image video tour, comprising:

        displaying a thumbnail view of an image associated with a predetermined facility in a first portion of the image editor, the image being stored in a database in the form of a data file comprising image data;

        selecting the thumbnail view of the image;

transferring the selected thumbnail view of the image to a second portion of the image editor; and

positioning the selected thumbnail view of the image in a predetermined order according to a tour layout plan of the predetermined facility within the second portion of the image editor, the predetermined order corresponding to a position of the image within the tour layout of an interactive image video tour of the predetermined facility.

13.   The method of claim 12, further comprising displaying a directory of the image in the first portion of the image editor, the directory providing a hierarchical representation of folders for organizing a plurality of images into separate groups.

14.   The method of claim 12, further comprising providing a tour map corresponding to the thumbnail view of the image contained in the second portion of the image editor for identifying a location of the image within the interactive image video tour.

15.   The method of claim 12, further comprising providing alternate images to the interactive image video tour for providing any of an up, down, left or right view of a selected image within the interactive image video tour.

16.   The method of claim 15, further comprising linking the alternate images to any other image associated with the interactive image video tour.

17.   The method of claim 12, further comprising providing arrows to the interactive image video tour.

18.   The method according to claim 17, wherein the arrows are provided on a tour map for identifying a location of the image within the interactive image video tour.

19.   The method of claim 17, wherein the arrows are provided on a tour map for identifying links associated with other interactive image video tours.

20.   The method of claim 12, further comprising providing a component overlay to the interactive image video tour.

21.   The method of claim 20, further comprising linking the component overlay to another interactive image video tour.

22.   The method of claim 12, further comprising providing an ARM overlay to the interactive image video tour.

23.   The method of claim 12, further comprising providing a CAM overlay to the interactive image video tour.

24.   The method of 12, further comprising providing directional paths within the interactive image video tour.

25.   The method of claim 12, further comprising providing hyperlinks in a tour map for traveling from the tour map to another tour map.

26.   The method of claim 12, further comprising providing tour lines in a tour map for indicating a location of the image within the interactive image video tour.

27.   The method of claim 12, further comprising providing tour points in a tour map 62 for indicating a location of the image within the interactive image video tour.

28.   The method of claim 12, further comprising providing primary images to the interactive image video tour, each of the primary images having a plurality of alternate images referenced thereto.

29.   The method of claim 28, further comprising providing coordinating arrow positions to the primary image for coordinating the position of the plurality of alternative images referencing the primary image.

30.   The method of claim 29, further comprising auto-positioning and rotating coordinating arrows associated with the coordinating arrow positions when adding the alternate images to the image video tour.

31.   The method of claim 12, further comprising designating a tour map associated with one interactive image video tour as a site plan for a plurality of interactive image video tours and providing a hyperlink from the tour map of the one interactive video tour to tour maps associated with other interactive image video tours.

32.   The method of claim 12, further comprising providing components to the interactive image video tour, the components comprising images having greater detail than the images within the interactive image video tour.

33.   The method of claim 32, further comprising cataloging capabilities of the components associated with the interactive image video tour.

34.   The method of claim 32, further comprising searching for the components by any of a component identification, system or type.

35.   A method of creating and editing portions of an interactive image video tour, comprising:

transferring a data file stored in an image database to a memory of a computer, the image database containing a plurality of data files representing a plurality of images associated with an interactive image video tour of a predetermined facility, each of the pluralities of data files comprising image data for displaying an image associated with a portion of the predetermined facility on a viewer associated with the computer;

displaying a thumbnail view of the image in a first portion of the image editor;

dragging the thumbnail view of the image from the first portion of the image editor to a second portion of the image editor;

positioning the thumbnail view of the image in a predetermined position according to a tour layout plan of the predetermined facility in the second portion of the image editor; and

displaying in the second portion of the image editor the image selected for use in the interactive image video tour of the predetermined facility.

36.   The method of claim 35, further comprising repositioning the predetermined position of the thumbnail view of the image within the interactive image video tour.

37.   The method of claim 35, further comprising rearranging the thumbnail view of the image in the second portion of the image editor.

38.   The method of 35, further comprising creating a tour map corresponding to the thumbnail view of the image contained in the second portion of the image editor for identifying a location of the image within the interactive image video tour.

39.   The method of claim 35, wherein the first portion of the image tour editor includes a directory panel portion.

40.   The method of claim 35, wherein the second portion of the image tour editor includes a tour panel portion.

41.   The method of claim 35, further comprising displaying a history list of directories selected while creating the interactive image video tour.

42.   The method of claim 35, further comprising displaying a directory of a plurality of images in the first portion of the image editor, the directory providing a hierarchical representation of folders for organizing the plurality of images into separate groups.

43.   The method of claim 35, further comprising displaying a tour map in the second portion of the image editor for identifying a location of the image within the interactive image video tour.

44.   The method of claim 43, further comprising displaying a directory of a plurality of tour maps 62 in the first portion of the image editor, the directory providing a hierarchical representation of folders for organizing the plurality of tour maps 62 into separate groups.

45.   The method of claim 35, further comprising displaying a plurality of images that have been selected for use within the interactive image video tour in the second portion of the image editor.

46 .   The method of claim 35, further comprising displaying a tour tree providing a hierarchical outline view of the interactive image video tour.

47.   The method of claim 35, further comprising providing alternate images to the interactive image video tour for providing any of an up, down, left or right view of a primary image of the interactive image video tour.

48.   The method of claim 47, further comprising linking the alternate images to any other image within the interactive image video tour.

49.   The method of claim 35, further comprising providing directional arrows to the interactive image video tour.

50.   The method of claim 49, wherein the arrows are provided on a tour map 62 for identifying a location of the image within the interactive image video tour.

51.   The method of claim 49, wherein the arrows are provided on a tour map 62 for identifying links associated with other interactive image video tours.

52.   The method of claim 35, further comprising providing a component overlay to the interactive image tour.

53.   The method of claim 52, further comprising linking the component overlay to another interactive image video tour.

54.   The method of claim 35, further comprising providing an ARM overlay to the interactive image video tour.

55.   The method of claim 35, further comprising providing a CAM overlay to the interactive image video tour.

56.   The method of claim 35, further comprising providing directional paths within the interactive image video tour.

57.   The method of claim 35, further comprising providing hyperlinks to a tour map for traveling from one tour map to another tour map.

58.   The method of claim 35, further comprising providing tour lines to a tour map for indicating a location of the image within the interactive image video tour.

59.   The method of claim 35, further comprising providing tour points to a tour map for indicating a location of the image within the interactive image video tour.

60.   A method of editing portions of an interactive image video tour, comprising:

        selecting a data file comprising image data and displaying an image associated therewith on a computer, the data file being stored in an image database containing a plurality of images for creating an interactive image video tour of a predetermined facility; and

        modifying one aspect of the image data contained in the selected data file.

61.   The method of claim 60, wherein selecting an image data file includes selecting a thumbnail view of the image associated with the image data file.

62.   The method of claim 60, further comprising displaying the image associated with the image data file in a first portion of the image editor.

63.   The method of claim 62, wherein the first portion of the image editor is a directory panel.

64.   The method of claim 62, further comprising displaying a thumbnail view of the image in the first portion of the image editor.

65.   The method of claim 64, further comprising selecting the thumbnail view of the image within the first portion of the image editor.

66.   The method of claim 65 further comprising dragging the selected thumbnail view of the image to a second portion of the image editor.

67.   The method of claim 66 wherein the second portion of the image editor is a tour panel.

68.   A computer-readable medium containing instructions for controlling a computer system to perform a method for editing an interactive image video tour, the method comprising:

transferring a data file stored in an image database to a memory of a computer, the image database containing a plurality of data files representing a plurality of images associated with an interactive image video tour of a predetermined facility, each of the pluralities of data files comprising image data for displaying an image associated with a portion of the predetermined facility on a viewer associated with the computer;

displaying a thumbnail view of the image in a first portion of the image editor;

dragging the thumbnail view of the image from the first portion of the image editor to a second portion of the image editor;

positioning the thumbnail view of the image in a predetermined position according to a tour layout plan of the predetermined facility in the second portion of the image editor; and

displaying in the second portion of the image editor the image selected for use in the interactive image video tour of the predetermined facility.

69.   A computer-readable medium containing instructions for controlling a computer system to perform a method for editing an interactive image video tour, the method comprising:

selecting a data file comprising image data and displaying an image associated therewith on a display terminal of a computer, the data file being stored in an image database containing a plurality of images for creating an interactive image video tour of predetermined facility; and

modifying one aspect of the image data contained in the selected data file.